

## The Circular Staircase

### CHAPTER XIV.

#### An Egg-Nog and a Telegram.

We had discovered Louise at the lodge Tuesday night. It was Wednesday I had my interview with her. Thursday and Friday were uneventful, save as they marked improvement in our patient. Gertrude spent almost all the time with her, and the two had grown to be great friends. But certain things hung over me constantly; the coroner's inquest on the death of Arnold Armstrong, to be held Saturday, and the arrival of Mrs. Armstrong and young Dr. Walker, bringing the body of the dead president of the Traders' bank. We had not told Louise of either death.

Then, too, I was anxious about the children. With their mother's inheritance swept away in the wreck of the bank, and with their love affairs in a disastrous condition, things could scarcely be worse. Added to that, the cook and Liddy had a flare up over the proper way to make beef-tea for Louise, and, of course, the cook left. Mrs. Watson had been glad enough, I think, to turn Louise over to our care, and Thomas went upstairs at night and morning to greet his young mistress from the doorway. Poor Thomas! He had the faculty—found



"I Am Very Sorry You Have Made This Decision," He Said.

still in some old negroes, who cling to the traditions of slavery days—of making his employer's interest his. It was always "we" with Thomas. I miss him sorely; pipe-smoking, obsequious, not over reliable, kindly old man!

On Thursday Mr. Harton, the Armstrongs' legal adviser, called up from town. He had been advised, he said, that Mrs. Armstrong was coming east with her husband's body and would arrive Monday. He came with some hesitation, at last, to the fact that he had been further instructed to ask me to relinquish my lease on Sunnyside, as it was Mrs. Armstrong's desire to come directly there.

I was aghast. "Here!" I said. "Surely you are mistaken, Mr. Harton. I should think, after what happened here only a few days ago, she would never wish to come back."

"Nevertheless," he replied, "she is most anxious to come. This is what she says: 'Use every possible means to have Sunnyside vacated. Must go there at once.'"

"Mr. Harton," I said testily, "I am not going to do anything of the kind. I and mine have suffered enough at the hands of this family. I rented the house at an exorbitant figure and I have moved out here for the summer. My city home is dismantled and in the hands of decorators. I have been here one week, during which I have had not a single night of uninterrupted sleep, and I intend to stay until I have recuperated. Moreover, if Mr. Armstrong died insolvent, as I believe was the case, his widow ought to be glad to be rid of so expensive a piece of property."

The lawyer cleared his throat. "I am very sorry you have made this decision," he said. "Miss Innes, Mrs. Fitzhugh tells me Louise Armstrong is with you."

"She is."

"Has she been informed of this—double bereavement?"

"Not yet," I said. "She has been very ill; perhaps to-night she can be told."

"It is very sad; very sad," he said. "I have a telegram for her, Miss Innes. Shall I send it out?"

"Better open it and read it to me," I suggested. "If it is important, that will save time."

There was a pause while Mr. Harton opened the telegram. Then he read it slowly, judicially.

"Watch for Nina Carrington. Home Monday. Signed F. L. W."

"Hum!" I said. "Watch for Nina Carrington. Home Monday." Very well, Mr. Harton, I will tell her, but she is not in condition to watch for any one.

"Well, Miss Innes, if you decide to—er—relinquish the lease, let me know," the lawyer said.

"I shall not relinquish it," I replied, and I imagined his irritation from the way he hung up the receiver.

I wrote the telegram down word for word, afraid to trust my memory, and decided to ask Dr. Stewart how soon Louise might be told the truth. The closing of the Traders' bank I considered unnecessary for her to know, but the death of her stepfather and stepbrother must be broken to her soon, or she might hear it in some unexpected and shocking manner.

Dr. Stewart came about four o'clock,

bringing his leather satchel into the house with a great deal of care, and opening it at the foot of the stairs to show me a dozen big yellow eggs nesting among the bottles.

"Real eggs," he said proudly. "None of your anemic store eggs, but the real thing—some of them still warm. Feel them! Egg-nog for Miss Louise!"

He was beaming with satisfaction, and before he left, he insisted on going back to the pantry and making an egg-nog with his own hands. Somehow, all the time he was doing it, I had a vision of Dr. Willoughby, my nerve specialist in the city, trying to make an egg-nog. I wondered if he ever prescribed anything so plebeian—and so delicious. And while Dr. Stewart whisked the eggs he talked.

"I said to Mrs. Stewart," he continued, "a little red in the face from the exertion, 'after I went home the other day, that you would think me an old gossip, for saying what I did about Walker and Miss Louise.'"

"Nothing of the sort," I protested. "The fact is," he went on, evidently justifying himself, "I got that piece of information just as we get a lot of things, through the kitchen end of the house. Young Walker's chauffeur—Walker's more fashionable than I am, and he goes around the country in a Stanhope car—well, his chauffeur comes to see our servant girl, and he told her the whole thing. I thought it was probable, because Walker spent a lot of time up here last summer, when the family was here, and besides, Riggs, that's Walker's man, had a very pat little story about the doctor's building a house on this property, just at the foot of the hill. The sugar, please."

The egg-nog was finished. Drop by drop the liquor had cooked the egg, and now, with a final whisk, a last toss in the shaker, it was ready, a symphony in gold and white. The doctor sniffed it.

"Real eggs, real milk, and a touch of real Kentucky whisky," he said. He insisted on carrying it up himself, but at the foot of the stairs he paused.

"Riggs said the plans were drawn for the house," he said, harking back to the old subject. "Drawn by Huston in town. So I naturally believed him."

When the doctor came down, I was ready with a question. "Doctor," I asked, "is there any one in the neighborhood named Carrington? Nina Carrington?"

"Carrington?" He wrinkled his forehead. "Carrington? No, I don't remember any such family. There used to be Covingtons down the creek."

"The name was Carrington," I said, and the subject lapsed.

Gertrude and Halsey went for a long walk that afternoon and Louise slept. Time hung heavy on my hands, and I did as I had fallen into a habit of doing lately—I sat down and thought things over. One result of my meditations was that I got up suddenly and went to the telephone. I had taken the most intense dislike to this Dr. Walker, whom I had never seen, and who was being talked of in the countryside as the fiancé of Louise Armstrong.

I knew Sam Huston well. There had been a time, when Sam was a good deal younger than he is now, before he had married Anne Endicott, when I knew him even better. So now I felt no hesitation in calling him over the telephone. But when his office boy had given way to his confidential clerk, and that functionary had condescended to connect his employer's desk telephone, I was somewhat at a loss as to how to begin.

"Why, how are you, Rachel?" Sam said sonorously. "Going to build that house at Rock View?" It was a 20-year-old joke of his.

"Sometime, perhaps," I said. "Just now I want to ask you a question about something which is none of my business."

"I see you haven't changed a lot in a quarter of a century, Rachel." This was intended to be another jest. "Ask ahead; everything but my domestic affairs is at your service."

"Try to be serious," I said. "And tell me this: Has your firm made any plans for a house recently for a Dr. Walker at Casanova?"

"Yes, we have."

"Where was it to be built? I have a reason for asking."

"It was to be, I believe, on the Armstrong place. Mr. Armstrong himself consulted me, and the inference was—in fact, I am quite certain—the house was to be occupied by Mr. Armstrong's daughter, who was engaged to marry Dr. Walker."

When the architect had inquired for the different members of my family, and had finally rung off, I was certain of one thing. Louise Armstrong was in love with Halsey, and the man she was going to marry was Dr. Walker. Moreover, this decision was not new; marriage had been contemplated for some time. There must certainly be some explanation—but what was it?

That day I repeated to Louise the telegram Mr. Harton had opened. She seemed to understand, but an unhappy face I have never seen. She looked like a criminal whose reprieve is over, and the day of execution approaching.

### CHAPTER XV.

Liddy Gives the Alarm.

The next day, Friday, Gertrude broke the news of her stepfather's death to Louise. She did it as gently as she could, telling her first that he was very ill, and finally that he was dead. Louise received the news in the most unexpected manner, and when Gertrude came out to tell me how she had stood it, I think she was almost shocked.

"She just lay and stared at me, Aunt Ray," she said. "Do you know, I believe she is glad, glad! And she is too honest to pretend anything

else. What sort of a man was Mr. Paul Armstrong, anyhow?"

"He was a bully as well as a rascal, Gertrude," I said. "But I am convinced of one thing: Louise will stand for Halsey now, and they will make it all up."

For Louise had steadily refused to see Halsey all that day, and the boy was frantic.

We had a quiet hour, Halsey and I, that evening, and I told him several things; about the request that we give up the lease to Sunnyside, about the telegram to Louise, about the rumors of an approaching marriage between the girl and Dr. Walker, and, last of all, my own interview with her the day before.

He sat back in a big chair, with his face in the shadow, and my heart fairly ached for him. He was so big and boyish! When I had finished he drew a long breath.

"Whatever Louise does," he said, "nothing will convince me, Aunt Ray, that she doesn't care for me. And up to two months ago, when she and her mother went west, I was the happiest fellow on earth. Then something made a difference; she wrote me that her people were opposed to the marriage; that her feeling for me was what it had always been, but that something had happened which had changed her ideas as to the future. I was not to write until she wrote me, and whatever occurred, I was to think the best I could of her. It sounded like a puzzle. When I saw her yesterday, it was the same thing, only, perhaps, worse."

"Halsey," I asked, "have you any idea of the nature of the interview between Louise Armstrong and Arnold the night he was murdered?"

"It was stormy. Thomas says once or twice he almost broke into the room, he was so alarmed for Louise."

"Another thing, Halsey," I said, "have you ever heard Louise mention a woman named Carrington, Nina Carrington?"

"Never," he said positively.

For try as we would, our thoughts always came back to that fatal Saturday night, and the murder. Every con-

versational path led to it, and we all felt that Jamieson was tightening the threads of evidence around John Bailey. The detective's absence was hardly reassuring; he must have had something to work on in town or he would have returned.

The papers reported that the cashier of the Traders' bank was ill in his apartments at the Knickerbocker—a condition not surprising, considering everything. The guilt of the defunct president was no longer in doubt; the missing bonds had been advertised and some of them discovered. In every instance they had been used as collateral for large loans, and the belief was current that not less than a million and a half dollars had been realized. Every one connected with the bank had been placed under arrest, and released on heavy bond.

Was he alone in his guilt, or was the cashier his accomplice? Where was the money? The estate of the dead man was comparatively small—a city house on a fashionable street, Sunnyside, a large estate largely mortgaged, an insurance of \$50,000, and some personal property—this was all. The rest lost in speculation probably, the papers said. There was one thing which looked uncomfortable for Jack Bailey: He and Paul Armstrong together had promoted a railroad company in New Mexico, and it was rumored that together they had sunk large sums of money there. The business alliance between the two men added to the belief that Bailey knew something of the looting. His unexplained absence from the bank on Monday lent color to the suspicion against him. The strange thing seemed to be his surrendering himself on the point of departure. To me, it seemed the shrewd calculation of a clever rascal. I was not actively antagonistic to Gertrude's lover, but I meant to be convinced, one way or the other. I took no one on faith.

That night the Sunnyside ghost began to walk again. Liddy had been sleeping in Louise's dressing room on a couch, and the approach of dusk was a signal for her to barricade the entire suite. Situated as it was, beyond the circular staircase, nothing but an extremity of excitement would have made her pass it after dark. I confess myself that the place seemed to me to have a sinister appearance, but we kept that wing well lighted, and until the lights went out at midnight it was really cheerful, if one did not know its history.

On Friday night, then, I had gone to bed, resolved to go to sleep. Thoughts that insisted on obtruding themselves I pushed resolutely to the back of my mind, and I systematically relaxed every muscle. I fell asleep soon, and was dreaming that Dr. Walker was building his new house immediately in front of my windows; I could hear the thump-thump of the

hammers, and then I waked to a knowledge that somebody was pounding on my door.

I was up at once, and with the sound of my footstep on the floor the low knocking ceased, to be followed immediately by sibilant whispering through the keyhole.

"Miss Rachel! Miss Rachel!" somebody was saying, over and over.

"Is that you, Liddy?" I asked, my hand on the knob.

"For the love of mercy, let me in!" she said in a low tone.

She was leaning against the door, for when I opened it, she fell in. She was greenish-white, and she had a red and black barred flannel petticoat over her shoulders.

"Listen," she said, standing in the middle of the floor and holding on to me. "Oh, Miss Rachel, it's the ghost of that dead man hammering to get in!"

Sure enough, there was a dull thud—thud—thud—it came apparently from the wall.

"It's not a ghost," I said decidedly. "If it was a ghost it wouldn't rap; it would come through the keyhole."

Liddy looked at the keyhole. "But it sounds very much as though some one is trying to break into the house."

Liddy was shivering violently. I told her to get me my slippers and she brought me a pair of old gloves, so I found my things myself and prepared to call Halsey. As before, the night alarm had found the electric lights gone; the hall, save for its night lamp, was in darkness, as I went across to Halsey's room, I hardly knew what I feared, but it was a relief to find him there, very sound asleep, and with his door unlocked.

"Wake up, Halsey," I said, shaking him.

He stirred a little. Liddy was half in and half out of the door, afraid as usual to be left alone, and not quite daring to enter. Her scruples seemed to fade, however, all at once. She gave a suppressed yell, bolted into the room and stood tightly clutching the foot-board of the bed. Halsey was gradually waking.

"I've seen it," Liddy wailed. "A woman in white down the hall!"

I paid no attention.

"Halsey," I persevered, "some one is breaking into the house. Get up, won't you?"

"It isn't our house," he said sleepily. And then he roused to the exigency of the occasion. "All right, Aunt Ray, let me get into something—"

It was all I could do to get Liddy out of the room. The demands of the occasion had no influence on her; she had seen the ghost, she persisted, and she wasn't going into the hall. But I got her over to my room at last, more dead than alive, and made her lie down on the bed.

The tappings, which seemed to have ceased for a while, had commenced again, but they were fainter. Halsey came over in a few minutes, and stood listening and trying to locate the sound.

"Give me my revolver, Aunt Ray," he said; and I got it—the one I had found in the tulip bed—and gave it to him. He saw Liddy there and divined at once that Louise was alone.

"You let me attend to this fellow, whoever it is, Aunt Ray, and go to Louise, will you? She may be awake and alarmed."

So in spite of her protests, I left Liddy alone and went back to the east wing. Perhaps I went a little faster past the yawning blackness of the circular staircase; and I could hear Halsey creaking cautiously down the main staircase. The rapping, or pounding, had ceased, and the silence was almost painful. And then suddenly, from apparently under my very feet, there rose a woman's scream, a cry of terror that broke off as suddenly as it came. I stood frozen and still. Every drop of blood in my body seemed to leave the surface and gather around my heart. In the dead silence that followed it throbbed as if it would burst. More dead than alive, I stumbled into Louise's bedroom. She was not there!

(To Be Continued.)

## Finds Cure for Epilepsy After Years of Suffering

"My daughter was afflicted with epileptic fits for three years, the attacks coming every few weeks. We employed several doctors but they did her no good. About a year ago we heard of Dr. Miles' Nervine, and it certainly has proved a blessing to our little girl. She is now apparently cured and is enjoying the best of health. It is over a year since she has had a fit. We cannot speak too highly



of Dr. Miles' Nervine.

MRS. FRANK ANDERSON, Comfrey, Minn.

Thousands of children in the United States who are suffering from attacks of epilepsy are a burden and sorrow to their parents, who would give anything to restore health to the sufferers.

**Dr. Miles' Nervine**

is one of the best remedies known for this affliction. It has proven beneficial in thousands of cases, and those who have used it have the greatest faith in it. It is not a "cure-all," but a reliable remedy for nervous diseases. You need not hesitate to give it a trial.

Sold by all Druggists. If the first bottle fails to benefit your money is returned.

MILES MEDICAL CO., Elkhart, Ind.



## A LEGION OF DEMONS.

Mark iv, 35; v, 20—Aug. 11.

"God to our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble; therefore will we not fear, though the earth be changed, and though the mountains be cast into the midst of the sea."—Psalm cxxxiv, 1, 2.

THE forefront of today's study is an account of a very severe wind storm on the Sea of Galilee. Jesus, tired from His teaching and healing, in which vitality went out of Him for the relief of the people, had gotten into one of the boats formerly used by some of His disciples in the fishing business and still owned by them. The purpose was to cross the lake for a season of rest. The Master was soon fast asleep. Suddenly a terrific storm set in which appalled even those accustomed to such scenes. They came to Jesus and aroused Him, saying, "Master, carest Thou not that we perish?" and He rebuked the wind, saying, "Peace, be still." And immediately "there was a great calm."

The text at the head of this study draws to our attention another storm. It pictures the great storm of trouble which in the close of this Age will suddenly burst upon the whole world of mankind and in which "Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots," "like a great millstone will be cast into the midst of the sea." This same "time of trouble," in some

Scriptures, is spoken of as a "whirlwind," the result of letting loose "the four winds of heaven," that will be held until that time—Revelation xvii, 5; xviii, 21; Jeremiah xxv, 32; Revelation vii, 1.

Again, this trouble is symbolized by a "fire," which will burn not only the earth (symbolical of organized society), but also the heavens (symbolical of ecclesiasticism). This symbolic fire, this great anarchistic blaze, will leave present institutions in "ashes." Upon the ruins, the ashes, of the blasted hopes and ambitions of society, political, scientific and religious, will arise the glorious Kingdom of Messiah to bless the world; and it will be as prophesied: "The desire of all nations shall come."

Our text pictures that coming "time of trouble" as a great "storm," which will entirely remove, or change the "earth," the present construction of society, and carry the "mountains," the kingdoms of this present time, into the sea of anarchy. God's people will to some extent be associated with all of these troubles; but they are not to fear, they are to realize that God is at the helm.

"Jesus Gave Them Leave."

In the heading we have connected this study with the demons, because the Scriptures intimate that the demons will have considerable to do with stirring up the great "time of trouble" and discontent with which this Age will close and Messiah's Kingdom be established.

On the other side of the Lake, as they landed, a man came running toward them. He was obsessed—that is to say, demons, the fallen angels mentioned by St. Jude (Jude 6) and St. Peter (II Peter ii, 4), had gained access, and were in control of him. It was these that recognized Jesus and spoke through the man's lips.

The Bible's explanation of how some angels fell from their original perfection and harmony with God, and of why they seek to gain control of humanity and commune with them through mediums, and personate the dead, we have not the space to present

in this study; but as there are many today more or less under the influence of demonism—spiritism—we will send further information upon postcard request.

Jesus gave the demons the privilege they requested. The swine, like the man, were crazed by the strange outside influence which took possession of their brains. They ran violently down a steep place into the sea and were drowned. Meantime, the man, released from his obsession, was again in his right mind, and praised God for his deliverance.

Those familiar with such matters claim that probably one-half of all the inmates of our insane asylums are persons obsessed by evil spirits, demons, without any organic disease of the brain. And alas! we see evidences on every hand that these evil spirits are paving the way for a great onslaught upon humanity.

Under the title of Psychic Phenomena spiritism is being examined by some of the prominent professors of our day. They, like other spiritists, are deceived in supposing that the manifestations which come to them are from their dead human friends. The Bible alone makes the matter perfectly clear. It assures us that the dead have no power to communicate, and that all such communications come from the demons, who do not dare to tell who they are, for if they did, humanity would be on guard against them.

A great storm of trouble is to end this age.

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## Sheriff's Sale!

By virtue of execution No. (636) issued from the Clerk's office of the six thirty six, directed to me, which Lincoln Circuit Court, in favor of Swift & Co., against J. J. Durham, I, or one of my deputies, will, on Monday, the 8th day of July, 1912, between the hours of one o'clock P. M. and two o'clock P. M. at the court house door in Stanford, county of Lincoln, Kentucky, expose to public sale to the highest bidder, the following property (or so much thereof as may be necessary to satisfy the amount of the plaintiff's debt, interest, and costs.) to-wit:

House and lot in the town of McKinney Lincoln county, Ky., and bounded thus, beginning at corner to Geo. Givens, thence south 73 East 19 3-4 poles; South 12 West 8 1-2 poles North 73 West 19 3-4 poles north 12 east 8 1-2 poles to the beginning containing one acre and one pole, being the land held by said J. J. Durham, under deed recorded in the office of the Clerk of the Lincoln County Court of Lincoln county, in deed book 44, page 533. By going upon said land and notifying the only occupant thereof the wife of the said J. J. Durham, of said levy. This levy is subject to the mortgage lien of the McKinney Deposit Bank, which is recorded in the office of the Lincoln County clerk's office in mortgage book N, page 139. Levy was made after failure to find any personal property upon which same could be levied on. This levy made May 8th, 1912. The amount of this execution is \$65.64 and cash expended \$11.75, with interest from Sept. 20th 1909, levied upon as the property of J. J. Durham.

TERMS: Sale will be made on a credit of (3) three months bond with approved security required, bearing interest at the rate of 6 per cent per annum from day of sale, and having the force and effect of a sales bond, this 20th day of June 1912.

W. L. McCarty, Sheriff Lincoln County Court

## Sheriff's Sale.

By virtue of execution No. 643 directed to me, which issued from the Clerk's office of the Lincoln circuit court, in favor of D. A. Puritt, against A. G. Coker, I, or one of my deputies, will, on Monday, the 12th day of August 1912, between the hours of one o'clock P. M. and two o'clock P. M. at the court house door in Stanford county of Lincoln, Ky., expose to public sale to the highest bidder, the following property (or so much thereof as may be necessary to satisfy the amount of the Plaintiff's debt, interest, and costs.) to-wit:

A certain tract or parcel land in Lincoln county Ky., on the head waters of South Fork, and adjoining the lands of Privett, on the east and north, and on the west by the lands of James Stull, south by the lands of Hub Jenkins, and containing twelve (12) acres. The amount of this execution is as follows: Principle \$200, (two hundred dollars) with interest 6 per cent from 10, day February 1910 until paid also the sum of eleven dollars and fifty cents, (\$11.50) cost expended, and the further cost of this action levied upon as the property of A. G. Coker.

TERMS: Sale will be made on a credit of three months bond with approved security required, bearing interest at the rate of 6 per cent, per annum from date of sale, and having the force and effect of a sales bond, this 26th, day of July 1912.

this 26th, day of July 1912. 60-3. W. L. McCARTY, Sheriff.

## Commissioner's Sale.

M. C. Delk, Adm'r etc., Plaintiffs, vs George Estes etc., Defendants.

Notice of Sale.

Pursuant to a judgment of sale heretofore rendered in the above styled cause, the undersigned will on Monday, (County Court Day.) Aug. 12th, 1912.

at about one o'clock, P. M., in front of the court house door in Stanford, Ky., offer for sale at public outcry on a credit of six months, to the highest and best bidder, the following described real estate, to-wit:

A tract of land on the waters of Green river in Lincoln county, Ky., bounded on the north by the lands of Enoch Barnett, on the east by the lands of Worth McWhorter, on the south by Green river, and on the west by the lands of Dr. Wesley, containing 27 3-4 acres of land, more or less.

TERMS: Said property will be sold on a credit of six months, and the purchaser will be required to execute bond for the purchase price with approved personal security, payable to the undersigned, bearing six per cent interest from date of sale, with the retained on the land to secure the payment thereof, the same having the force and effect of a judgment.

This July 22nd, 1912.

George D. Florence, Special Commissioner, L. C. C.

T. J. Hill, Atty. for Piffs.